

How to disable the use of USB storage devices

(<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb:en-us:823732>)

Important This article contains information about how to modify the registry. Make sure to back up the registry before you modify it. Make sure that you know how to restore the registry if a problem occurs. For more information about how to back up, restore, and modify the registry, click the following article number to view the article in the Microsoft Knowledge Base:
[256986](#) Description of the Microsoft Windows registry

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SUMMARY

This article discusses two methods that you can use to prevent users from connecting to a USB storage device.

To Disable the Use of USB Storage Devices

To disable the use of USB storage devices, use one or more of the following procedures, as appropriate to your situation:

If a USB Storage Device Is Not Already Installed on the Computer

If a USB storage device is not already installed on the computer, assign the user or the group Deny permissions to the following files:

- %SystemRoot%\Inf\Usbstor.pnf
- %SystemRoot%\Inf\Usbstor.inf

When you do so, users cannot install a USB storage device on the computer. To assign a user or group Deny permissions to the Usbstor.pnf and Usbstor.inf files, follow these steps:

1. Start Windows Explorer, and then locate the %SystemRoot%\Inf folder.
2. Right-click the **Usbstor.pnf** file, and then click **Properties**.
3. Click the **Security** tab.
4. In the **Group or user names** list, click the user or group that you want to set Deny permissions for.
5. In the **Permissions for *UserName or GroupName*** list, click to select the **Deny** check box next to **Full Control**, and then click **OK**.
Note In addition, add the System account to the **Deny** list.
6. Right-click the **Usbstor.inf** file, and then click **Properties**.
7. Click the **Security** tab.
8. In the **Group or user names** list, click the user or group that you want to set Deny permissions for.
9. In the **Permissions for *UserName or GroupName*** list, click to select the **Deny** check box next to **Full Control**, and then click **OK**.

If a USB Storage Device Is Already Installed on the Computer

Warning Serious problems might occur if you modify the registry incorrectly by using Registry Editor or by using another method. These problems might require that you reinstall your operating system. Microsoft cannot guarantee that these problems can be solved. Modify the registry at your own risk. If a USB storage device is already installed on the computer, set the **Start** value in the following registry key to 4:

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\UsbStor

When you do so, the USB storage device does not work when the user connects the device to the computer. To set the **Start** value, follow these steps:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Run**.
2. In the **Open** box, type **regedit**, and then click **OK**.
3. Locate, and then click the following registry key:
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SYSTEM\CurrentControlSet\Services\UsbStor
4. In the right pane, double-click **Start**.
5. In the **Value data** box, type **4**, click **Hexadecimal** (if it is not already selected), and then click **OK**.
6. Quit Registry Editor.